

## Iowa Communications Network

May/June 2012 Newsletter

# ICN Insider

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

Membership Changes to ICN's Commission	1
Engaging with Iowa's Municipal Utilities	1
Assisting with the Clean-Up in Creston	2
Status with ICN's Federal Broadband Project	2
Accurate Troubleshooting With Instrument	3
Employee Spotlight	3
Upcoming K-12 Connections	4

*Thanks to everyone who stopped by the ICN booths at the recent 1:1 Conference and the IACON Conference.*



## Membership Changes to ICN's Commission

Kathleen Kohorst is the newest commission member to serve on the Iowa Telecommunications and Technology Commission (ITTC), the governing body of the ICN. Kohorst's membership becomes effective on May 1.

Kohorst is an active private attorney practicing in Harlan, Iowa. She graduated from Harlan High School and St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She received her Juris Doctorate degree from Creighton University in 1981, and was admitted to the Iowa State Bar

Association. She was Trustee and President of the Board of the Harlan Municipal Utilities. She served on the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities Board, and was on the American Public Power Association (APPA) Policy Board.

Richard Bruner is the new chairperson of the ITTC. Bruner's chairperson position becomes effective on May 1. Bruner was previously appointed as a member of the ITTC in 2011.

Both appointments by Governor Branstad received Senate confirmation on March 21. Governor

Branstad appointed both Kohorst and Bruner to replace the previous ITTC chairperson Betsy Brandsgard. Commission members are appointed for six-year terms, and Commissioner Brandsgard's membership and chairmanship appointments expired April 30.

The ITTC, an executive branch agency, was established, in 1994 by statute, with the sole authority to supervise the management, development, and operation of the ICN. The six-member Commission provides for the centralized, coordinated use, and control of the Network.

## Engaging with Iowa's Municipal Utilities

Dave Lingren, Executive Director of the ICN, spoke on April 12 at the Telecommunications Conference held at the Ramada Tropics Resort and Conference Center in Des Moines, Iowa by the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU). During the Regulatory Update breakout session, Lingren spoke about the current status of the RFP

for the Sale/Lease of the Network, the RFP Implementation Team (RIT) process, as well as concerns, impacts and benefits to Iowa communities. ICN's goal with the entire RFP process is to illustrate openness and transparency, which helps all of Iowa's telecommunications providers in understanding the value of the state-wide Network.



*Dave Lingren speaking at the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities Conference.*

**Message from  
Dave Lingren,  
ICN's Executive  
Director**

*Demand for broadband connectivity is increasing dramatically. Rising expectations are resulting in growth in data traffic, fueling a limitless need for capacity (bandwidth) available everywhere and on demand. ICN's dedicated Network ensures network congestion does not interfere with critical services, and provides access on demand for critical functions. The ICN is more than the means to avoid virtual traffic jams, it is making Iowa a better, safer, and a more enriching place to live.*

## Assisting with the Clean-Up in Creston

ICN staff members were involved in the clean-up efforts in helping the Creston area recover from the storms that devastated parts of the city on Saturday, April 14. Green Hills Area Education Agency (AEA) was hit by a tornado, and South Western Iowa Community College (SWCC) was without power for a period of time. Both locations are authorized users that ICN provides Internet and video services to.

Green Hills AEA is the aggregation point for the area schools' Internet service. This means that the AEA feeds Internet connections to several high schools in the area. Green Hills AEA relocated their equipment to SWCC's FOTS (fiber-optic termination site) room, which has a direct connection to the Network.

The benefit to moving the equipment to this location meant that the AEA had a direct connection on the state-wide fiber-optic

Network. This relocation allowed for services to be restored to the majority of area schools by the afternoon of April 16.

In addition, video conferencing sessions that were scheduled for the community college and the AEA were either relocated or cancelled due to the clean-up efforts.



*Pictures of  
Green Hills  
AEA after  
the tornado  
on April 14*

*Photos  
provided by  
Dave Blair.*

## Status with ICN's Federal Broadband Project

We wanted to share some interesting facts related to ICN's federal broadband project.

Did you know that the entire federal broadband project covers an estimated 1,300 data requests, with a target of about 65 completions per month. Normally data requests for the ICN fluctuates a great deal, but we have averaged about 72 per month over

the last 6 years. With this broadband project, our work essentially doubles the amount of orders being processed by the ICN. ICN added dedicated field resources in November/December 2011, which has helped tremendously in keeping the project ahead of schedule.

To provide a reference point, each data request covers 10 tasks, so there

are over 13,000 tasks to be completed within this project.

Everyone involved in this project has been dedicated, which ensures that ICN stays ahead of due dates and customers are satisfied with the services provided.

Visit [icn.state.ia.us/broadband](http://icn.state.ia.us/broadband) for more information about ICN's project.



## Accurate Troubleshooting With Instrument

ICN is using state-of-the-art technology that speeds up troubleshooting when searching for breaks, splices, and bends in the fiber-optic cables located throughout the state.

The Optical Time Domain Reflectometer (OTDR) is used to measure the time and intensity of the light reflected on an optical fiber. The OTDR's technology is integrated into ICN's new ADVA DWDM (dense wavelength division multiplexing) system, which was acquired and deployed as part of our federal

broadband (BTOP) project. Normally, OTDR equipment stands alone, but the integration allows the components to be linked via the fault management software for alarming and remote access/testing.

A benefit to ICN in utilizing integrated OTDR technology is during a *Loss of Signal* situation. During this event, a technician can log into the appropriate site's system and initiate a test to determine if the fiber path is intact or if there is an opening indicating a fiber disruption. Identifying

fiber disturbances can easily save 1-2 hours (potentially more depending on the location of the technician responding to the outage) by directing resources to repair a fiber cut, thus avoiding the time to determine potential equipment spares.

An additional benefit is the functionality can be set up to monitor the fiber segments to trigger an alarm and notify ICN's Network Operations Center when a signal loss is greater than the pre-determined threshold is exceeded.

*The ICN, a state agency, is the country's premier fiber-optic Network, committed to continued enhancement of distance learning and providing lowans with convenient, equal access to education, government, and healthcare.*

## Employee Spotlight: Tammy Ranfeld

Tammy Ranfeld is an Accounting Technician 2 within the Finance Department at the ICN. Her primary duties consist of making purchase orders payments, paying ICN's federal BTOP (Broadband Technology Opportunities Program) expenditures, processing invoices from miscellaneous vendors, and making mail runs. She has been with the ICN for four and a half years. Tammy previously worked for ICN's billing department before moving to payables department.

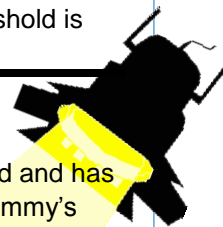
Prior to working for the ICN, she spent time with the Baker Group as a

project accountant, and with Toy Network as an accounting manager. Tammy began her education at Indian Hills Community College where she received a Management Certificate through Hy-Vee. She then attended Des Moines Area Community College for a degree in business.

Tammy's immediate family consists of her daughter Raegan, who just turned four and Demon, their nine year old Siberian Husky. She has two older brothers, Dan and Randy. Dan lives in Georgia is married, has two adopted children, and works for CNN. Randy, lives here in Des Moines

and is also married and has two daughters. Tammy's mother and father still live in the Des Moines area and continue to play a large role in her life. Tammy enjoys spending time with her nieces and her daughter.

Tammy is infatuated with the Iowa Hawkeyes; however, she does place a special emphasis on Hawkeye football. Additionally, she occasionally volunteers for the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society. Her favorite food is pasta, and she loves Olive Garden's chicken alfredo. Her most memorable life experience was holding her daughter Raegan for the first time.





*Do you have new staff,  
administrators, or  
friends who might be  
interested in receiving  
this newsletter? Please  
pass it on and have  
them contact  
[lori.larsen@iowa.gov](mailto:lori.larsen@iowa.gov) to  
be placed on the  
distribution list.*

*Remember to visit ICN's  
website at  
[www.icn.state.ia.us](http://www.icn.state.ia.us)  
to keep updated on all ICN  
related news.*



Iowa Communications Network  
Grimes State Office Building  
400 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 725-4692  
Toll Free: 1-877-426-4692  
[www.icn.state.ia.us](http://www.icn.state.ia.us)

## Upcoming Video Session for Students and Educator through Iowa Public Television's Connections

### The World of Laura Ingalls Wilder

Tuesday, May 8, 11:00 AM - 11:55 AM Audience: **Grades 3-6**

Pioneer life as captured by Laura Ingalls Wilder in her Little House books has been a special place for millions of readers ever since Little House in the Big Woods was published in 1932. We will map Laura's journeys from Pepin, Wisconsin to Kansas and back again to the Big Woods; then off to Walnut Grove, Minnesota; Burr Oak, Iowa; and De Smet, South Dakota; and finally to Mansfield, Missouri, her home for over 60 years. We will use fiddle music, photographs from Laura's albums, videos, letters written by Laura and Rose, and period artifacts to make Laura's world come to life. Join us as we look behind the scenes at one of the most beloved children's authors, Laura Ingalls Wilder.

Registration Deadline - Friday, May 4, 2012

### Stories & More: Dreams and Wishes

Thursday, June 7, 10:00 AM - 10:50 AM; 1:00 PM - 1:50 PM Audience: **Grades 1-4**

Summer Stories & More sessions are correlated with the national summer reading program. The theme for 2012 is ***Dream Big READ!***. Sessions consist of a story read aloud, a professional guest presenter, and an activity. Each week is a new topic and several opportunities to participate.



Registration Deadline - Friday, June 1, 2012

### Mandatory Reporter Training for Suspected Child and Dependent Adult Abuse

Thursday, May 17, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM; 3:30 PM - 6:30 PM Audience: **Educators, School Staff**

It is the role and responsibility of all education professionals to protect children and dependent adults from harm both self-inflicted and perpetrated by others. The goal of this course is to increase the knowledge and awareness of child and dependent adult abuse. The course has a special emphasis on mandated school reporters such as school licensed employees, authorized coaches, certified paraeducators, and health professionals.

Registration Deadline – Friday, May 11, 2012

### For More Information about Upcoming K-12 Connections Contact:

Marcia Wych or Abby Brown  
Educational Services  
(800) 532-1290 or (515) 242-4181  
[abby@iptv.org](mailto:abby@iptv.org)  
[www.k12connections.iptv.org](http://www.k12connections.iptv.org)

Please share this newsletter with others. To be added to the distribution list, please e-mail [lori.larsen@iowa.gov](mailto:lori.larsen@iowa.gov). If you wish to be removed from the list, please reply to this e-mail with "unsubscribe" in the subject line.